



The title page of a book featuring gold-tooled decorations on a dark red background. At the top center is a large, ornate floral scroll. Below it is a horizontal band with small floral motifs. The main title, "THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION", is written in a large, decorative, serif font, with "THE CHURCH" on the first line and "CIVILIZATION" on the second line. A decorative flourish or scrollwork separates the title from the author's name. The author's name, "POPE LEO XIII.", is written in a smaller, but also decorative, serif font. At the bottom center is a large, ornate floral scroll, similar to the one at the top.

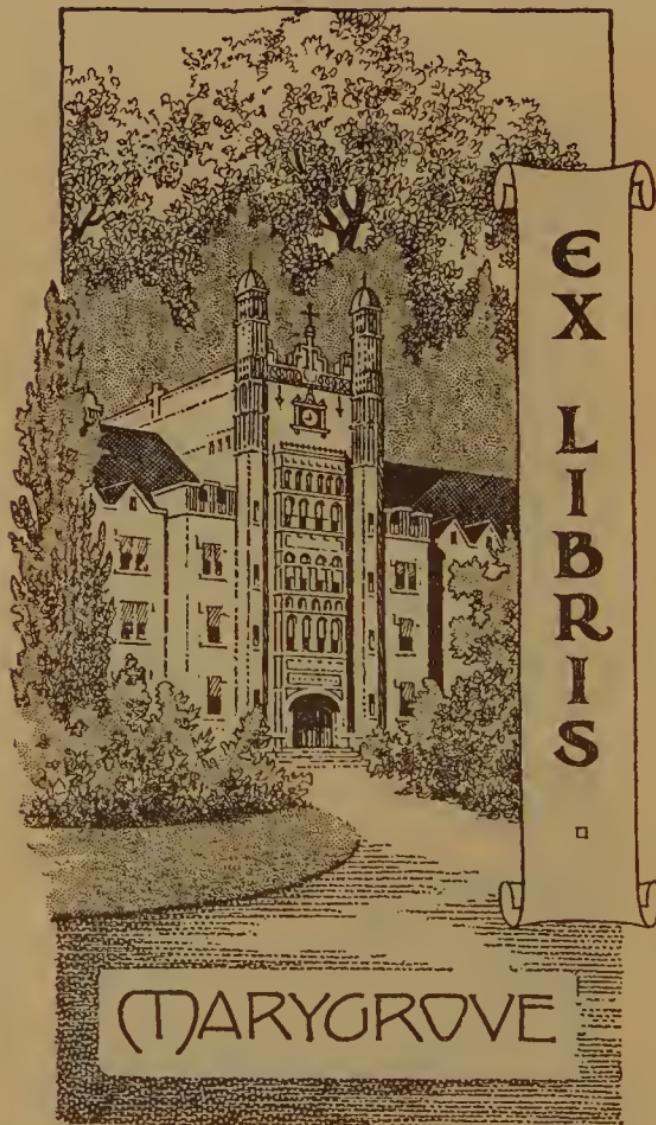
THE CHURCH AND  
CIVILIZATION

POPE LEO XIII.

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# THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION.

PASTORAL LETTERS FOR LENT 1877-1878.

BY CARDINAL PECCI,

NOW

POPE LEO XIII.

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## THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION.

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THE permanent duty that our ministry imposes on us, dearly beloved brethren, of announcing to you the truth, has become more imperative in our day, by reason of your needs, which have become more urgent in these evil times in which we live. We must speak to you, that we may enlighten your minds, which it is sought to obscure by false and seductive doctrines, and to put you on your guard against maxims that are openly propagated, and which are eminently dangerous.

In the first place, our words should end the confusion of ideas that men are endeavoring

to establish to such an extent, that one no longer knows exactly what should be rejected and what should be accepted as good and just. For, dearly beloved, the warfare that is waged against God and His Church is especially to be feared, because it is not always conducted fairly, but rather with ruse and hypocrisy. If the impious by whom we are surrounded always openly declared the object they desired to attain, our task would be a much easier one ; and, on the other hand, the faithful, by the very enormity of their intentions, would be deterred from giving any heed to their seducers.

But things are not done in this way ; men make use of deceitful words, of language that is not clear and precise in its sense, and then without defining terms, they are given as food to the curiosity of the public, and they build upon them so many citadels, as it were, from which they pour their furious volleys upon the Church, her ministers and her doctrines.

Numerous and striking examples of this artifice may be adduced, but to mention only one word that unbelievers make such frequent use of, who does not know, dearly beloved, that the word

#### CIVILIZATION

is everywhere repeated, and the claim set up that between it and the Church there exists a bitter hatred and an irreconcilable enmity.

This word, which, by itself, is very vague, and which those who use it are very careful never to define clearly, has become the scourge that belabors our shoulders, the instrument used for beating down the most holy institutions, the wedge that opens the way for the most deplorable excesses.

If the Word of God and of His representative here on earth are spoken of in derision, it is civilization, we are told, that requires it. It is civilization that wants to restrict the number of churches and of sacred ministers,

and which, at the same time, asks that places for the commission of sin be multiplied. It is civilization that clamors for theatres bereft of all sense and modesty.

In the name of civilization all restraint is removed from the most exorbitant usury and from dishonest gains, and it is in the name of civilization, too, that a vile press corrupts the mind, and that art, prostituting itself, offends the eye with infamous statues, and opens the way to the corruption of hearts. Under the cover of a deceitful word, that rises up like a venerated banner, the poisoned flood flows freely along, and amid the most distracting rumors and the overthrow of ideas, it seems to be accepted, that it is our fault that civilization has not made greater progress, and that it has not reached the highest of destinies. This is the origin of what men want to call the struggle of civilization, but which should be more properly called the violent persecution of the Church.

You will not be surprised then, dearly

beloved, if in addressing you our Pastoral Letter, as is customary on the approach of Lent, we enter into a lengthy discussion of this question of civilization, so as to prove to you, by plain facts, that every blessing this civilization expresses has come to us in the past through the medium of the Church, and that it is solely through the maternal solicitude of the Church that they will be preserved to us in the future.

## II.

We will not, however, in undertaking to discuss this important question, lay ourselves open to the reproach we made our adversaries, only a few moments ago, that of using words which, not being sufficiently defined, are liable to create confusion. Truth gains nothing by this system; and you, beloved brethren, who have often heard the voice of your pastor, know that there is nothing dearer

to our heart than the triumph of truth over error.

We shall then, from the very start, endeavor to explain the mystery of this word, so often uttered, and we shall not think we have wasted our time, if in giving a clear definition of this term, our discourse becomes more luminous and better arranged.

### III.

It is evident, and the least reflection will suffice to convince any one of the fact, that man was created by God for society, and so constituted that, without society, he could not possibly exist. The child, if left entirely to itself, would perish much quicker than the flower, whose life is only of a few hours. Arriving at the period of adolescence, lacking judgment and experience, he would often err to his own detriment, if no one were at hand to guide him, to teach him how to regulate his life properly, and to dispose him

to do good to others as others should do good to him.

What would become of him on reaching manhood without the tutelary cares of that society of which he forms a part? A celebrated French economist (Frederic Bastiat) has collected together, in a picture, as it were, the many blessings that man finds in society, and it is a prodigy worthy of admiration. Look at the least of men, the most obscure of artisans ; he has always, wherewithal, good or bad, to clothe himself, to cover his feet. Consider how many persons, how many peoples must have been employed to furnish each one with clothes, shoes, etc.

Every man can daily raise a piece of bread to his mouth ; look again at how much labor, how many hands it has taken to accomplish this result, from the laborer who with difficulty ploughs the ground to plant the seed, to the baker that has converted the flour into bread ! Every man has certain rights ; he finds in society lawyers to defend them, ma-

gistrates to enforce them by their sentences, soldiers to make them respected. Is he ignorant? He finds schools, men who write books for him, others that print them, and others that publish them.

To satisfy his religious tendencies, his aspirations towards God, he finds some of his brethren, who, forsaking all other occupations, devote themselves to the study of sacred sciences, renouncing the world, its pleasures, and their families to be better able to respond to these superior demands. But this is enough to show you that it is indispensable for us to live in society so that our wants, which are as exacting as they are varied, may be gratified.

#### IV.

Society, then, being composed of men essentially capable of improvement, cannot stand still; it advances and perfects itself. One age inherits the inventions, discoveries

and improvements achieved by the preceding one, and thus the sum of physical, moral and political blessings can increase most marvelously. Who would compare the miserable huts of the primitive nations, their clumsy tools, and their imperfect instruments, with what we have in our nineteenth century? There is no comparison between the work done by our machines so ingeniously contrived, and that which came laboriously from the hands of man.

There is no doubt whatever, that the old, and badly laid out roads, the insecure bridges, the long and disagreeable journeys of olden times are far inferior to our railroads which, in a certain way, give wings to our feet, and which have diminished the proportions of our planet because of the proximity into which they have brought its inhabitants. Is not the age in which we live, because of the gentleness of public manners, and the propriety of customs, far superior to the gross and brutal manners of the barbarians? And are not re-

ciprocal relations vastly improved? Has not the political system, in certain respects, improved under the influence of time and experience? We no longer behold examples of private vengeance tolerated, punishment by fire, the law of retaliation, etc. Have not petty feudal tyrants, quarrelous communities, and wandering bands of undisciplined soldiery entirely disappeared?

It is, then, indeed, a fact that man in society goes on improving to the three-fold degree of physical well-being, moral relations with his fellows and in political condition. Now the different degrees of the successive development to which men, united together in society, attain is called civilization. This civilization is nascent and rudimentary when the conditions in which man perfects himself under this three-fold point of view, are slightly developed; it is great when these conditions are more full; it would be complete if all these conditions were perfectly performed.

## V.

Having thus given a true idea of civilization, so as not to be open to the charge of striking in the dark and of fighting the air, we will proceed to take up the great question which in our day holds the world in suspense.

Is it true that civilization cannot bring forth fruit in a society that lives in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, and in the midst of which the Catholic Church speaks with the voice of a Mother and Teacher? Will man be doomed not to mingle with the society of those who enjoy civilization in the physical, moral and religious order, if he does not rebel against the Church, and if he does not repudiate her? We would have to admit this, if we hold to ideas that prevail, and to events that are transpiring before our eyes.

For we must say that this incompatability exists in Christianity and the Church, from

the moment it is thought necessary to wage a bitter warfare against the Church in the name of civilization, and that men are persuaded that they must renounce all hope of amelioration, until they get rid of the Church. This, dearly beloved, is the question we consider great and all-important. Now, if it were resolved to the detriment of the Church, there would no longer exist any means of arresting the apostacy of her children, who could not help entertaining a feeling of contempt for an institution that would force them to remain barbarians and savages.

## VI.

But if the question is a very grave one in itself, and because of the consequences growing out of it, it is one of those which require nothing more than calm reflection and an impartial scrutiny into facts, to beget a brilliant triumph for the Church.

And it is precisely by the help of calm re-

flection and by the unflickering light of facts that we are going to discuss it, so that no misconstruction of language may lead any one into error or to suspect the Church.

Such a subject cannot, however, because of its great range, be confined within the necessarily narrow limits of a Pastoral Letter. It will be well, therefore, to divide it, and content ourselves, on this occasion, with dealing with civilization in so far as it fulfills the conditions by which man perfects himself in a physical and material respect. It is not without due consideration that we commence with this view of the subject ; for, without considering that it is the first to develop itself, and, consequently, the first to attract attention, it is, moreover, the most important, not because of its intrinsic value, but because of the disordered tendency of our age, which is pre-eminently occupied with things that relate to temporal ideas and destinies.

## VII.

Is it true, then, dearly beloved, that in the Church, and in following its teachings, man is prevented from arriving, in regard to physical well-being, at that degree of civilization it would be possible for him to reach if he were free from all trammels and from all dependence on the Church? How easy it is for us to answer in the words of a well-known writer not suspected of any tenderness for the Church: "What an admirable thing! The Christian religion, that appears to have no other aim than our happiness in another life, and yet secures our happiness on this earth."\*

## THE DIGNITY OF LABOR.

Now, dearly beloved, men regard as a source of prosperity the labor from which flows all public and private wealth, all perfec-

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\* Montesquieu. *Esprit des Lois*; 24, iii.

tions of matter and all ingenious discoveries. Now, labor, whether we take it in its humblest form, which is manual labor, or in its noblest form, which is the study of nature to learn its powers and apply them to the uses of life, what has ever given it greater encouragement than the religion of Jesus Christ, which preserves itself pure and unalterable in the Church ?

Labor has been despised and it is still despised wherever Christianity does not extend its beneficent empire. Aristotle called it *illiberal*.\* Plato conferred the same epithet upon it.† The laboring classes, that have always been an object of the Church's most affectionate solicitude, were not even regarded by the Greeks as worthy of the name of citizens ; they were reduced almost to the rank of slaves.‡ The free man, in full possession of all his rights, does not labor, he is even disgusted with the fine arts ; he must show himself in the theatres, be a votary of

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\* Politique, 3, iii ; 8, ii.

† De Rep.

‡ Politique, 2, i.

fashion, and make alike his idleness and his eloquence manifest in the assemblages he frequents. In this respect the manners of the Romans were not unlike those of the Greeks.

That grave philosopher and orator, Cicero, had such a contempt for labor that he looked upon laboring men and handcraftmen as barbarians and nobodies.\* Terence, who is a good witness of the ideas that were received and that were in vogue in Rome in his day, gives us to understand that to be honored and respected, a man had to lead an idle life, and not be obliged to work for a living.† Juvenal tells us what was the most popular occupation of the Romans : “ To cringe or be insolent with the rich so as to obtain from them food and sanguinary amusements.”‡

Such, dearly beloved, was the condition of the two most cultivated nations of heathenism, and outside of these people labor has never

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\* Quest. Tusc., v. 36.

† Eum. ii, 2.

‡ Satyres x, 81.

been honored to a greater extent, and is not any more so at the present.

Like the old Germans described by Tacitus, who held labor in abhorrence, so also in our day do we see the same antipathy perpetuating itself among the nations deprived of the light of the Gospel. In the Indies, a Brahmin, that is, a man belonging to the higher classes, would consider himself tarnished if he so much as touched a pariah. The Indians of North America abstain from labor and impose it upon the women who are treated as slaves, and, if we may quote a famous *Review*: "Even here among ourselves, who have nevertheless attained such high culture, labor is respected only in words, and while men bow before the rich, they do not smile upon those whose hands are hardened from contact with implements of toil."\*

#### THE DIGNITY OF LABOR.

This state of things disappeared as the in-

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\* *Revue des Deux Mondes*, t. lxi, p. 70.

fluence of the Christian religion made itself felt upon the great body of society. From the very first, labor was honored as a super-human dignity, for Jesus Christ, the true Son of God, was willing to be subject to a poor artisan of Galilee, and He did not blush to labor with His own blessed hands in an humble workshop in Nazareth. It was by labor that the Apostles, sent forth by Jesus Christ, desired to earn their living, so as not to be a burden to their brethren and to be able also to succor the indigent.\*

The Fathers of the Church, at a later period, seemed at a loss for words adequate to express their strong desire to recommend and extol it by holding it in the very highest esteem. St. Ambrose† and St. Augustine ‡ extolled labor because of its usefulness. St. John Chrysostom shows that labor, in that it is imposed upon us as an expiation, also serves to strengthen our moral nature. Fi-

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\* Acts of the Apostles, xx, 34.

† Vita Beata I, 6.

‡ De Oper, Monachor, 3.

nally, labor enables man not only to supply his own wants, but also to assist his fellow men.

#### WHAT LABOR OWES TO MONASTICISM.

Every true and beautiful thought connected with labor springs from Christianity, all flow from the bosom of the Church, and the Church, in compliance with nature, has exerted a powerful influence to give these thoughts a place in events and in institutions. Monasticism, especially devoted to labor, and more particularly to agriculture, came next to take its place in society, and gave a glorious and powerful impetus to general prosperity. Separated by thirteen centuries from the origin of this great institution, having grown proud of our industries and of our advancement, we have lost sight of the times through which it lived, of all it has done and of all for which the civilization, even of our day, is indebted to it.

What praises must we not render to those poor monks, who gave such a great impetus to that which makes life more prosperous and comfortable !

We live in an age when labor increases, in which the man who has a large capital seeks to increase it by labor, and when he who has none, exerts himself to acquire, by labor, the riches he desires ; but the men who congregated together under the discipline of the Church, lived in barbarous and troublous times, at a time when no one took pleasure in working, and when he who had a strong arm thought he could make no better use of it than to offer it to some rapacious adventurer, to sow the seeds of carnage and ruin. And yet in spite of these disastrous circumstances, they spread over Europe that had been a desert, and changed its whole aspect by covering it with a rich and luxuriant vegetation.

Let us, in imagination, go back to those times, and let us consider, dearly beloved,

what an efficacious and profitable example these men were giving, who, rejoicing in an humble garb, satisfied with a fare that kept them alive, suspended their prayers to go into a field to plow the earth in which they planted the seed, which in the time of harvest, was to supply bread to the poor, to the pilgrim, and to whole countries. They also exerted themselves to the utmost to open roads, and build bridges, so as to make transit from one country to another more convenient, and to make commerce more easy and secure. What advantages has not society acquired from the experience of these men, who, multiplying their labors and their efforts with a patience that nothing could weary, and uniting their strength and their light for one common object, succeeded in draining marshes, in turning rivers, in collecting the scattered waters so as to assist the irrigation of the meadows in such an ingenious manner, that according to the authority of an illustrious historian, men of modern times, notwithstanding the

progress of natural science, can learn something from these old inmates of the cloister.\*

It was not alone the primitive arts and those strictly indispensable to agriculture that owed their existence and their impulse to the labor of the monks inspired and directed by the Church. Mechanical arts and the fine arts had no surer retreat nor better field for their development, than the churches, episcopal residences, the monasteries in which the former were moulded, and from which the latter emitted those sparks that were subsequently to be transformed into a splendor wonderfully brilliant.

If, then, labor is a source of wealth, and if public wealth is an evidence of civilization and of human perfection in an exterior and physical regard, it can not be questioned that the Church has incontestable claims to the gratitude of all, and that a warfare undertaken against her, in the name, and for the

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\* Cantu *Storia degl' Italiani*.

interests of civilization, would be as senseless as it would be unjust.

### VIII.

This manifest folly and injustice are still more evident, if we consult our civil history, which the enemies of the Church, full as they are of unfounded hatred and prejudices, either never read or forget too soon after reading. What! dearly beloved, is it proposed to abandon the Church, by declaring that she is incapable of fostering that civilization and happy progress that is longed for? Now, if we do not disregard the historical documents that relate to our country, we must admit that society in Italy never soared higher in its flight toward civilization than when it was supported by the breath of Christianity, and entirely surrounded by a Catholic atmosphere. In spite of all our boasting and vanity, I really do not know whether men of good sense would have the assurance to

claim that in the matter of political or industrial greatness, we, of the present day, are likely to excel our Catholic ancestors, whose words and acts attest their faith.

Venice, Genoa, Pisa, Lucca, Florence and other Italian cities and provinces, as long as they were respectful to the authority of Holy Church, filled with faith, as is evinced by the many magnificent Basilicas and other buildings of Christian charity, possessed a power that, considering the times and imperfect means at hand, surpassed those of the most flourishing nations. Ionia, the Black Sea, Africa and Asia were the scenes of the commercial relations and the military expeditions of our forefathers, there they achieved important and fecund victories, and while their banners waved inspiring fear and respect abroad, they were not idle at home. They cultivated the arts, and trade increased public and private wealth by every honest means. The manufacturers of wool, of silk, of gold-ware, of stained glass, of paper, at Florence,

Pisa, Bologna, Milan, Venice and Naples, supplied thousands upon thousands of workmen with profitable work, and attracted to our markets the money and the trade of other lands.

From this came that extravagance so energetically complained of by Alighieri, Villani, Vacchi, and by nearly all our chroniclers, and which was the result of the wealth produced by this commerce. Here, too, was the origin of that growth and splendor of the fine arts, which naturally came to charm the leisure of a life of comfort. The names of Gioto, Arnolfo, Brunellescho, down to those of Pietro Perugio, Rafael, Titian, Vignola, Palladio, and a host of others, formed a fitting crown for the picture that represents the wonderful progress of civilization in a society that was not obliged to give up its attachment to the Church and to become infidel that it might keep up with the rapid march of perfection and to add ease and charms to life.

## IX.

But the Church has not only the unquestionable merit of having ennobled and sanctified labor ; she has not merely the glory of having caused society, conducted and inspired by her, to make rapid strides in the way of civilization ; she has a still nobler merit, a still higher glory : that of having restrained men within reasonable bounds, and having prevented herself from being carried by an excessive love of labor to such an extent as to convert into a source of barbarous oppression what, exercised with discretion, is a means of obtaining for herself desirable advantages and an honest prosperity.

## NON-CHRISTIAN CIVILIZATION.

The modern schools of political economy, tainted with infidelity, regard labor as the greatest end of man ; and they regard man

himself as a mere machine, more or less valuable in proportion to its *productiveness*. Hence that contempt for man's morality, hence that abuse of poverty and weakness, on the part of those who want to take advantage of them for their own ends. How many complaints and how many solemn grievances have we not heard, even from the countries that are considered at the summit of civilization, with regard to the long working hours imposed on those who are obliged to earn their bread by the sweat of their brows !

And those poor children put out in factories, where they are worn out with over-work, do they not awaken pity of the beholder, do they not call forth the indignation of every generous soul, and do they not oblige governments and assemblies to devise laws to prevent this human traffic? And if Catholic charity, inexhaustible in its resources, did not come to their aid with its *crèches*, its asylums for childhood, how many children would there not be left to themselves when

the mania for work tears from the domestic fireside not only the man, but even the mother? Ah! dearly beloved, when we see these things, when we hear them related by lips that are above suspicion, it is impossible for us to withhold the feeling of indignation that swells within us against those who dream of intrusting into the hands of such barbarians the destinies of that civilization they pretend so much to encourage.

But what is still worse is that that inordinate labor, which enervates and consumes the body, is still more ruinous to souls in which it gradually destroys all traces of divine resemblance. By dint of keeping men tied down to matter, wrapped up, absorbed in it, the life of the soul vanishes in these poor victims of labor gone back to Paganism. Everything that elevates man, everything that makes him what God intends him to be, the adopted son of the Saviour, the heir to the kingdom of heaven, fades before his eyes, falls into oblivion, and leaves unrestrained in

man everthing that relates to his brutal passions and his animal instincts.

In the presence of such sad realities, engendered by the avarice and pride of those who are devoid of feeling, one may well ask whether these partisans of a civilization separated from the Church, and without God, do not, instead of making us advance, rather throw us back several centuries by returning us to those deplorable times when slavery bound such a large proportion of men, and when the poet Juvenal declared, with sorrow, that the human race exists for the amusement of a few citizens.

Now, who corrects this rash impetuosity that is running away with our age, better than the Catholic Church, which, if on the one hand, she urges all men to labor, on the other hand, resorts with superhuman wisdom to the best means to prevent its abuse? Indeed, without stopping at the consideration that for her, words of humanity and fraternal love are, by no means, mere words devoid of meaning,

who does not know how effectually she has succeeded in soothing bitterness, in breaking in upon the painful continuity of labor, by the repose of Sunday and the Christian solemnities that, from time to time occur, and bring a religious joy into the great family of believers.

As, during a long journey across a desert under the burning rays of the sun, the traveler comes with inexpressible delight upon some spot where mighty trees afford him a desired shade, and the fresh grass offers him a place of rest; so, also, these happy days appear to refresh the body with rest, and to fill the soul with ineffable consolations. Then the poor working man wipes from his brow the dust of the field and of the workshop, and, in his Sunday attire, inhales the breath of life with greater happiness; he remembers that God did not create him to be tied forever to the car of matter, but to be its master. It is for him that the sun sends forth its life-giving rays; it is for him that the hills emit their

healthy perfumes ; it is for him that the fields spread out that verdant tapestry to which, with his wife and children, he resorts for innocent amusement ; it is for him that God has created these blessings which, though modest in appearance, are in his eyes brighter than all others.

Having gone into the Church, where he is called by the voice of religion, he finds there pleasures that no other place can afford him : the music of the sacred canticles charms his ears, his eyes are dazzled by the sight of precious marbles, rich gildings, elegant decorations, and the grandeur of architectural lines ; but above all this his heart is moved and purified by the words of the minister of God, who reminds him of his redemption, his duties and his immortal hopes. It is on these days, too, that the innocent joys of the family cease to be a mere desire and become a reality. Standing by the side of his wife, surrounded by his children, he exercises the noblest and the sweetest of all sovereignties,

he knows his subjects, who are a part of his own heart ; they know him, he inquires into their necessities ; and the love of labor, stimulated by a desire of saving, enables him to supply them. It is thus that he comes out of his holiday rest, recuperated in mind and body, and this recreation, which some presume to call objectionable idleness, is, on the contrary, a secund truce ; for, after having enjoyed it, he returns to his work with renewed energy and without that antipathy which is the out-growth of compulsory or condemned labor.

#### PROFANATION OF HOLY DAYS.

And here, dearly beloved, how much might we say about this lamentable custom which is everywhere increasing, and even amongst us, of profaning those holy days which belong really to God, but which can, as we have seen, also be called man's days. How we feel our hearts lacerated when we see on Sundays and holidays these deplorable scan-

dals, the shops open, artisans plying their usual avocations, machinery in operation, trade uninterrupted and preventing all thoughts of the far more important affairs of the soul, and of application to the study of truths, that are to lead us through the straight paths of time to the sure and blessed destinies of eternity.

No, dearly beloved, this work that is done to the detriment of God's glory and of our most sacred duties, can never be made the work that is to increase public and private wealth. On the contrary ; for, as a famous infidel of the last century has justly remarked, "the people require not only time to earn their bread, they also require time to eat it with satisfaction, otherwise they will soon cease to earn it." A holiday renews the exhausted forces of man, and after it he resumes his work with greater pleasure and earnestness.

## X.

From the few considerations we have rapidly referred to, and notwithstanding all we have been obliged to pass over in silence, you see, dearly beloved, how unjust and unfounded is the war declared by the sectaries and infidels against the Holy Church, in the name of civilization, inasmuch as she is the practical worker of the conditions by which man perfects himself in the physical and material order. It is clearly evident, on the other hand, that civilization does not exist where nations are withdrawn from the maternal discipline of the Church, but permit themselves to be carried away by passions, which always prevent and corrupt what would in itself be good and salutary.

But the better to illustrate this subject, which, because of received ideas and of prevailing prejudices, is, as we have said before,

highly important, we want to go a little farther, and to inculcate on your minds more firmly the conviction that civilization, not only has nothing to fear from the Church, but has everything to hope from her and from her co-operation. It would be folly to ignore a fact that looms up before our eyes, that science, by dint of daily study and wise experience, has availed itself of many of the forces of nature which were either unknown to man or escaped his control ; these forces, employed with art, by the aid of ingenious machinery, have made production more rapid, the objects produced less expensive, and, consequently, they have made the satisfying of our wants more easy, and the life of those who have not much to dispense less trying.

There is nothing better than these discoveries ; but infidels have sought to make use of these fortunate and peaceful victories of science over nature, as an arm with which to strike the Church, as if these conquests had been made in spite of her and contrary to her

desires. To give weight to this odious calumny, the pretext is resorted to that the Church is continually occupied with the sanctification of souls, and that she insinuates into hearts a mysterious horror for things here below ; whence men deduce that if a little good grows out of it, or is to result from, these advancements, it is due to the revolt they agree to call the *modern spirit* against the influence of the Church.

It would be difficult to imagine a more foolish and more groundless charge than this. The Church cannot cease to proclaim aloud to all men the maxims of her heavenly Spouse : that the soul and its eternal salvation is the most important matter that claims our attention ; that it would avail us nothing to gain the whole world, if we lose our own souls ; that wealth accumulated by years of labor may be swept away in a single night.

It is an inestimable blessing that such instructions can be proclaimed among men ; but it cannot for that reason be said that the Church

is an enemy to the study of nature, to an inquiry into the forces of nature and of their application to the production of that which contributes to the usages of life. It is evident, on reflection, that she cannot be opposed to these studies and inventions, inasmuch as she is, by the very nature of things, led to encourage them.

Examine, then, and judge for yourselves. Can there be anything more desired by the Church, more earnestly sought for, than the glory of God, and a more perfect knowledge of the Divine Workman, which is to be obtained by the study of His Works ?

Now, if the universe is a book, on every page of which is written the name and the wisdom of God, it is evident that he who has read this book most carefully and most intelligently will be most filled with the love of God, and will approach nearer to God.

If it is enough to have eyes to see that the stars proclaim the glory of their Creator, if it is enough to have ears to listen to the words

of praise that one day brings forth after the other, and the secrets of Divine knowledge which night sheweth to night (Psalm xviii), with how much more splendor will the power and wisdom of the Godhead manifest themselves to him who will look into the heavens and the depths of the earth, who will observe the twinkling stars, and the atoms, the plants, and the trees, who will gather together those convincing proofs that a sovereign wisdom has ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight? (Wisdom xi, 21.) And you think the Church systematically hostile, or simply cold and indifferent to the studies and researches which develop such priceless results, that she should persist in keeping the book closed, so that no one can read any more of its pages? You must be very ignorant of the ardent zeal that burns in the bosom of that Spouse of Christ, to give faith to such stories as these.

## XI.

But by the side of a zeal for the glory of God there is another love in the Church that burns no less brightly ; it is a love for man, an ardent desire that he be restored to all the rights his Creator has conferred upon him. Now, man has received from God, for his inheritance in time, this earth on which he lives and of which he was made the master. The word that resounded on the morning of creation : “Subdue the earth and rule over it” (Gen. i, 28), has never been revoked. If man had remained in a state of innocence and grace, he would have exercised his dominion without an effort ; the subjection of all creatures would have been spontaneous, whereas now this domination is difficult and creation obeys the rein only when compelled so to do.

But this domination is not substantially destroyed, and the Church, which is a Mother,

can have nothing more at heart, than that it be put in practice, and that man prove himself to be what he really is the lord of creation.

And, indeed, this King of all creatures exercises his right when, tearing away the veil that hides his possessions, he does not stop at what falls under his eyes, or what he finds under his hands, but diving into the very depths of nature, gathers up the treasures of fecundity of forces he finds there, and bends them to his profit and to that of his fellow men.

How grand and majestic, does not man appear, dearly beloved, when he lays his hands on the thunderbolt and makes it fall powerless at his feet; when he seizes the electric wire, and sends it, the messenger of his desires, across the depths of the ocean, over steep mountains, across interminable plains! How glorious he becomes when he commands steam to give wings to his feet, and carry him with wonderful speed over

land and sea ! How mighty he is, when by these various ingenious processes, he overcomes this very force, imprisons it and leads it through wonderfully combined channels to give motion, and intelligence, to brute matter, so to speak, which thus takes the place of man and spares him the most severe fatigues ! Tell me, dearly beloved, if there is not in him some spark, as it were, of his Creator ; when he evokes the light and causes it to dissipate the darkness of night and decorate vast halls and palaces with its splendors. The Church, that loving Mother, who knows all this, is so far from placing obstacles in its way, that she is, on the contrary, full of joy and jubilation at the sight of all this.

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XII.

Besides, what reason could there be for the Church to be jealous of all the wonderful advancements that our age has realized by its researches and discoveries ? Is there any-

thing in them that can in any way affect the ideas of God and of faith of which the Church is the infallible guardian and mistress ?

Bacon of Verulam, who distinguished himself in the culture of natural sciences, has written that a little learning removes from God, but much learning attracts men towards Him. This golden maxim is always equally true, and if the Church is alarmed at the ruin that a few vain men can make, who imagine they understand everything because they have a slight smattering of everything, she has every confidence in those who devote their minds to the deep and serious study of nature, because she knows that at the end of their researches they will find God, Who displays Himself in His works with all the unimpeachable attributes of His power, wisdom and goodness. If some learned sage, in studying nature, goes away from God, it is a sign that the heart of the unfortunate man is already contaminated by the venom of infidelity that has entered into him through the ave-

nue of culpable passions. He did not become an atheist because he cultivated learning, but in spite of learning, which should naturally develop far nobler results. Indeed, the large majority of those who acquire great and lasting knowledge in the sciences, through the studies they have gone through, and by their ingenious discoveries, have, as it were, erected a ladder with which to mount to heaven and glorify God.

The great astronomer Copernicus was profoundly religious. Kepler, another father of modern astronomy, thanked God for the pleasure He made him experience in his ecstacies, in which he was transported by the contemplation of the works of His hands. (*Myster. Cosmogr.*) Galileo, to whom experimental philosophy is indebted for so powerful an impetus, was led, by his studies, to declare that the Holy Scriptures and nature alike point out the works of God ; the first as dictated by the Holy Spirit, the second as the faithful performer of His laws. (*Galileo,*

*Opere I, xxix.)* Linnæus, by his study of nature, was so inflamed that the words dropped from his lips were like those of a Psalm : “God eternal,” he exclaimed, “Immense, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Thou hast appeared to me, in some manner, in the works of creation, and I have been overwhelmed with wonder. In all the works of Thy hand, even the smallest and most insignificant, what power, what wisdom, and what unspeakable perfection do I behold !”

“The utility they are to us attest the bounty of Him Who made them ; their beauty and harmony display His wisdom ; their preservation and their inexhaustible fecundity proclaim His power.” (Syst. Nat.) Fontenelle, who, it appears, was regarded as the *Encyclopædia* of his time, in the France of the eighteenth century, already poisoned by the breath of infidelity, could not help saying : “The importance of the study of physics does not proceed so much from the fact that it satisfies our curiosity, but because it lifts

us up to a less imperfect knowledge of the Author of the Universe, and revives in our minds the sentiments of veneration and admiration which we owe Him." Alexander Volta, the immortal inventor of the Voltaic battery, was a sincere Catholic, and in times that were not propitious to faith, gloried in being a Catholic, and did not blush at the Gospel. Farraday, the illustrious chemist, saw a means by which to reach God in the science he was passionately studying, and he could not tolerate infidels.

We might go on enumerating other learned men, both living and dead, all of whom were unanimous in their religious avowals. But it is not necessary, and it would carry us far beyond our limits.\*

This is what true and solid learning accomplishes in honest minds, in which so many useful applications of the arts and manufactures are begotten; and hence it is that

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\* See Eugenio Alberti - Il Prob. del dest. um. append al Lib. I.

no thinking man will allow himself to be deceived by false accusations, and will refuse to believe that the Church views the study of nature with suspicion, or disdains, or combats the happy consequences that proceed from this study for the public good. This is a part of civilization, not the most important in itself, but one to which we must, nevertheless, give due consideration. Now, dearly beloved, as you see, it will not do to make war upon the Church to favor the interests of civilization, which would be most happy and in continual progress if it was not sought to wrest it from the hands of its good and tender Mother to give it over into those of evildoers, who carry it on in such a blame-worthy manner that every honest heart is filled with compassion for it.

### XIII.

In having thus far defended the Church against unjust charges, we have not, how-

ever, reached the bottom of our subject ; we have yet to speak of a merit that is incomparably more striking than any other, and that the most signal bad faith cannot refute. It is not enough, dearly beloved, that labor is encouraged, ennobled and sanctified, that man continually extends his empire over the powers of nature, and compels her to serve him ; it is, moreover, necessary not to forget that there is a large portion of our brethren, who, through the misfortune of birth or of other circumstances, cannot earn their living by labor of any kind. Now, what a terrible thing it would be if all these unfortunates were to be excluded from this movement, called civilization, so long as they fulfill the conditions by which man perfects himself, in the physical point of view, in his relations with his fellow-men. In vain will the imagination try to conceive a world from which all the ills of life are banished, and which will be smiling on every side like a perpetual holiday. Reality will ever bring its bitter disenchant-

ments, and in the midst of the joys of the banquet, misfortune will ever rise up like a spectre, and shed its sinister light!

How great is the number of victims made by the infirmities that weaken the powers, physical imperfections, an incapacity for learning, wars, the vicissitudes of trade, the countless and varied sources of misfortune ! How many persons are there who have fallen by the wayside, what a multitude of orphans, how many unfortunates, who are loudly calling for succor ! With all these classes, Paganism has dealt with great unconcern ; to a small number of freemen, a turbulent flock, it gave bread and savage amusements ; children that were too numerous for the comfort of the family, or which promised no strong arms to the State, were strangled or put to death in one way or another ; the aged, the infirm, the hopeless, were cast upon some island or some out-of-the-way place, where they perished under their burdens. It would be well for modern admirers of Pagan civili-

zation to recall these facts to their own minds, and to the minds of others. On this point, Christianity, and the Catholic Church, in which alone Christianity is preserved in all its purity, have not only given a new impulse to civilization, but have made it soar so high, that *neither the tongue nor the pen can follow it.*

The precepts of charity, laid down by our beloved Redeemer, were received with holy transport, and His example imitated with incomparable fidelity. From the very beginning, not only were the rich most earnestly exhorted to give out of their abundance, but those who earn their living by the labor of their hands were likewise exhorted to make every effort to possess the means wherewith to help the weak, and obtain the blessings reserved for those who would rather give of their goods than receive the goods of others. (Acts xx, 35.) It would be a long and useless task to rehearse the history that has been told over and over again, to illustrate how, from the very earliest ages, the Church has

been careful to better the condition of the unfortunate ; moreover, this history has been written in our own day, and there is no one who does not know it.\* A distinguished modern apologist does not hesitate to assert that whoever wanted to write the history of charity, would be, in a manner, obliged to write the history of the Church.†

She was not content with establishing asylums, hospitals, retreats, but she did incomparably more ; she caused the divine virtue of sacrifice to penetrate into the souls of her children ; to this most noble aim tend all her exhortations, her splendid worship, and especially the Mass she calls upon us to hear, and the Eucharistic Table to which we are all invited. Before we ever heard of the crumbs that fall from the rich man's table to allow some Lazarus, covered with sores, to appease his hunger, we might, perhaps, by a great

\* V. F. de Champagny. *La Charité Chrétienne dans les Premiers Siecles de l'Eglise.*

† F. Hettinger. *Apol. del Christ.* Vol. II, Lib. 22.

effort, it is true, have arrived at that degree of bountifulness, either by a natural goodness of heart, or by the softening of manners, or again through the medium of our civil laws ; but no one could ever have put into practice what has been accomplished under the discipline of the Holy Catholic Church, namely, the sacrifice of self, of liberty, pleasure, riches, health, and not unfrequently of life itself, for the needs and consolations of all unfortunates. This is what Christianity inspires. This is what is never seen outside of the Catholic Church.

There is not a corner of the world, not a country ever so small, in which there are not to be found persons, who renounce the pleasures and comforts of life, everything that is alluring, to devote themselves cheerfully to the painful mission of tending the sick, of rescuing the fatherless and forsaken, of visiting the poor at their rooms, and going even into the dismal haunts of those outcasts that society has been obliged to alienate from its

bosom. Even in the days in which we live, when faith is banished from hearts, when Christian virtues are lost sight of by so many because of continued and violent contradictions, when it would seem as if there were no higher or more important object than to acquire wealth and to spend in the pleasures of the Sybarite, the riches acquired by not unquestionable means ; when, in a word, everything conspires to destroy the love of sacrifice, you need only, dearly beloved, cast your eyes around you to convince yourselves that the work of charity is still going on with fervor ; that grace is not diminished, that the vivifying breath of God pervades all parts of the Church, to awaken the power of sacrifice and that a prodigious energy is ready to alleviate all manner of afflictions.

#### XIV.

Ah ! dearly beloved, when, after having examined, with an unspeakable delight, this

splendid proof of the divinity of the Church and of its beneficent influence, we hear of the warfare waged against her in the name of civilization, we admit that it is impossible for us to rid ourselves of a profound sorrow, and we cannot drive from us the sinister presentments of the scourges that this impious and mad contempt for the blessings we have received, must bring upon us.

War against the Church, dearly beloved ! But why and with what object is this contest ? Is it to plunge men into the weariness of a labor that is regarded as the great end of man, adopted as an instrument for raising himself over the bowed heads, and over the trampled bodies of his fellows ? War against the Church ! Again, wherefore is this contest ? Is it to give the people over into the hands of a doubtful and necessarily weak bounty, to tear them from the bosom of the religion that inspires and incites the prodigies of divine charity ? Why is this contest ? Is it to wipe out the glorious history of Christian

civilization and revive a civilization that has only emitted splendor and light enough to reveal, more clearly, the festering corruptions of man's heart?

## XV.

But the Catholic Church, by the mouth of her Head, has declared that there can be no peace with the civilization of our times. (*Syllabus : Prop. LXXX.*) This is the war cry that is sent up against us from the enemy's camp, and the reason made use of to justify the struggle that has been inaugurated.

### WHAT IS MODERN CIVILIZATION ?

But, dearly beloved, what is this modern civilization that the Church condemns, and with which her august Head, the Infallible Master of the faithful, declares that there can be nothing in common? It is not, most assuredly, that civilization under which man

perfects himself in the three-fold relation we have indicated ; no, it is not that one, but it is a civilization that *seeks to supplant Christianity*, and with it, to destroy every blessing it has brought upon us.

If those who so artfully use the *Syllabus*, and set it up as a bug-bear before the world, had reflected that it is not enough to be artful, but that they must also, and above all, be honest, they would not have rested satisfied with having held up to the hatred of the world a proposition detached from a long discourse ; but they would have endeavored to give it its true meaning, according to the connection of the documents to which it belongs and which was opportunely pointed out. By acting in this way, they could easily have convinced themselves that it is not that true civilization, that springs up like a flower and a fruit from the roots of Christianity, that has been condemned by the Sovereign Pontiff, but that bastard thing that has only the name

of civilization, and which is the perfidious and implacable enemy of the genuine.

## XVI.

To pretend that the Church has an aversion for the arts, or the sciences, or for the study of nature and of its forces, is to make equally calumnious assertions. If your minds are not yet sufficiently undeceived, and your doubts dissipated by the reasons we have given you, and by the fact that the most penetrating and the most learned and the most illustrious minds have nearly always been very faithful Christians and devoted children of the Church, the recent declarations of the Church will complete the refutation of all falsehoods.

The Fathers of the Vatican Council have spoken on this subject in language that our adversaries would do well to read and ponder upon. After teaching that there can be no disagreement between reason and religion, and that the one comes magnificently to the

assistance of the other, they exclaim : " Far be it from the Church to hamper the cultivation of human arts and sciences, she, on the contrary, comes to their aid, and encourages them. For she does not ignore, nor does she despise the advantages to life that have accrued from them ; she confesses, on the contrary, that the sciences, coming as they do from God, if they are properly treated, can, by means of divine grace, lead back to God."\*

The accusations brought forward are, then, utterly unfounded, worthless, and are, moreover, the expression of the hatred that is nourished against the Church and of the desire entertained to blacken her fair name.

But if science, in itself, far from being condemned, is favored by the Church, there is

\* Concil. Vatic. Cap. iv. De Fide et Rat.—Qua propter tantum abest, ut Ecclesia humanarum artium et disciplinarum culturae obstat, ut hanc multus modis juvet atque promoveat, Non enim commoda ab iis ad hominum vitam dimanantia aut ignorat aut despicit ; facetur imo eas, quemadmodum a Deo scientiarum Domino profectae sunt, ita si rite pertractentur, ad Deum, juvante ejus gratia, perducere.

one that is condemned with all justice. It is the science that engenders that Philosophy that, with Satanic pride, says : “ Human reason is, without any regard to God, the only true arbiter of true and false, of good and evil ; it is its own law, it suffices by its natural powers to secure the happiness of men and of nations.”\*

It is that science that dives into matter and assigns it to eternity, that goes up to the firmament and descends into the bowels of the earth to look in vain for an argument with which to destroy Biblical cosmogony ; it is that science that debases man to the level of the brute, and which, by its extravagances, shakes the very foundations of moral, domestic and civil order, that the Church opposes. Now, every man knows that, far from complaining, he ought to raise his hands to God

\* *Syllabus.* I. 3d.—*Humana ratio, nulle prorsus Dei respectu habito, unicus est veri et falsi, boni et mali arbiter, sibi ipsi est lex et naturalibus suis viribus ad hominum ac populorum bonum curandum sufficit.*

in thanksgiving for having sent into this world that Infallible Authority, which, while it invokes every blessing for the present and for the future, likewise preserves every blessing for us, by rescuing us from the impious hands of those who would wrest them from us.

## XVII.

Ah! dearly beloved, let none of you allow yourselves to be led away by those who come to flatter you with deceitful words, so as to make proselytes of you and to allure you to your own destruction! If, as is the case among great and generous souls, you love the honest advancements and the development of civilization, depend upon it, that you can in no way make better progress, nor contribute better to the development of civilization, than by remaining faithful, in heart and soul, to the practices of the Catholic faith.

You have in part seen the evidences of this truth, and it would be most pleasing to us to throw the same light on the points that relate to the improvement of man in a political and moral point of view, if, instead of writing a Pastoral Letter, we had intended to write a long treatise, and if we did not purpose, if life is spared us, to revert to this subject another time.

The facts are there, however, to show to every one where this insensate warfare upon the Church, in the name of civilization, has brought us.

From the humblest artisan, up to those who, by birth and position, occupy the higher walks of society, there is no one who can say that he has derived from this contest anything but bitterness and discouragements ; and, if casting his eyes still farther, he seeks to discover what will be the final results of these impious attacks, if he has sense and heart, he will feel overwhelmed by a chill of horror.

On the one hand, we see multitudes robbed of every hope of the future, of every consolation that faith brings to the unfortunate ; multitudes who can find no compensation in the pleasures of this world, too poor for their desires, and too full of miseries and contrasts ; on the other, a small number of men on whom fortune smiles, who have not the smallest spark of Christianity burning in their souls, and bent only on hoarding and enjoying. We see, on the one hand, men trembling with despair, and who seem to have gone back to the savage state ; on the other, obscene pleasures, dances and festivities, that excite the indignation of the poor man who is not succored, and which provoke the chastisements of heaven. These are the gains promised us ! this is what this open warfare, in the name of civilization, against the Church, promises us, and it is destined to throw us back again into the horrors of barbarism. Now, there is a way to put an end to present evils, and to prevent dangers in the fu-

ture, and it can only be found in your fidelity to the laws of God and of the Church, observing them courageously, and setting examples of Christian life.

And what more opportune time than the season we are now going into for commencing this truly reparatory work? Those who claim to represent this age ask for a civilization outside of God and against Him, and they will not get it. For you, dearly beloved, you must say and prove by your acts, that it is by the grace of God, and by harkening to His voice, represented by the voice of the Church, that the blessings bequeathed to us by our fathers can alone be preserved and perpetuated.

It is through the grace of God and through the guidance of His Church, that the nations will become truly and gloriously civilized. If, at any time, you feel your soul weakening at the sight of this great uprising of men, of governments and of sciences against God and His Church, forget not that you have an in-

vincible and all-powerful weapon of defence :  
*Prayer!*

Arm yourselves with this weapon in public and in your homes. Let your cries of supplication go up to God, Who is a most faithful defender, and the Buckler of whoever puts his trust in Him. Pray for our city, for yourselves, for your families ; pray for the Church.

In the meantime we give you our Pastoral Benediction, and we pray that Divine grace may be abundantly poured out upon you in every manner by the gifts and consolations of heaven.

PERUGIA, from our Episcopal Residence,  
February 6, 1877.

G. Cardinal PECCI, Bishop.



# THE CHURCH AND CIVILIZATION.

[LENTEN PASTORAL, 1878.]

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## I.

United to you, for many years, by the sacred bonds of the Pastoral Ministry, and by relations that have ever been characterized by mutual affections, we feel, beloved sons, the full weight of a separation, which, although imposed upon us by the gravest of reasons,\* is none the less painful to us.

Under the influence of such a feeling, you

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\* His Eminence Cardinal Pecci, having been appointed by Pius IX, in September, 1877, Camerlengo of the Holy Roman Church, was compelled by the duties of his office to reside permanently in Rome.

can readily understand with what satisfaction we behold the approach of the holy season of Lent, which obliges us, by virtue of our charge, to break silence, and to address you, speaking as your pastor.

Since it is not given us to return to you in person, we will do so by writing to you, to commune with you and to be comforted together by that which is common to us both, your faith and mine.\* This is the consolation that God reserves to Bishops, as if to indemnify them for much sorrow and bitterness; for what can be more agreeable to us than to speak to our flock, which is our joy and our crown,† to speak to it of God, of His Christ, of His Holy Church, of our religious duties, of our immortal hopes, and to say in the language of the Apostle, “Be thus strong in the Lord, O, well beloved!” This is a happy circumstance which relieves us from that confusion of thoughts, that impetuous whirl-

\* Rom., i, 12.

† Philip, iv, 11.

pool of vain and culpable desires, of arid and fruitless efforts, which occupy and weary our times.

But, this respite itself is not even granted us, prevented as we are, by the corrupted and corrupting times that now prevail, from a peaceful and strictly familiar interchange of pious sentiments. While thinking of recalling to your minds and of rekindling in your hearts sentiments of faith and the practices it imposes, we cannot lose sight of the fact that faith itself is compromised, and that men, hostile to God and His Church, are making every effort to uproot it from your souls, whence it becomes our duty to warn you, that we may not merit the reproach made in the Holy Scriptures to Pastors who do not keep faithful watch over their flocks, when the wolf comes to ravage them.\*

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\* Isaias, lvi, 2.

## II.

It was this reflection, dearly beloved, that led us last year to speak to you upon "Civilization," that specious pretext made use of by the enemies of the Church, and I showed you that it was not necessary to organize a league against us to secure its prosperity, because it is impossible for us not to be the agents of true civilization. And as the extent of the subject would not have permitted us to develop, nor even to glance over the whole of it, we spoke, if you remember, of civilization as regards the physical well-being of men living in society, postponing until another favorable occasion, the examination of another phase of civilization. Of the two that still remain for our consideration, we shall take up only one, so as not to make our Pastoral Letter too long.

Now, of these two phases, the first we

shall examine, is that which relates to the progressive perfection of man as an intelligent being. The logical order of things would seem to require this. But without regarding this order, we shall only stop to consider civilization inasmuch as it is a perfection brought to man's relations as a *moral being*. Our reason for this, is, that the Bishop, in speaking to his flock, does not write books and classical treatises, but goes straight to the error that bears most upon his Diocese and threatens it with the most grave disorders. We commenced by treating civilization in regard to material welfare, because it is in this relation that it most particularly affects our age, so absorbed in these ideas ; we are now going to deal with it as destined to perfect the relations of man, *morally*; this is, unquestionably, the highest point of view, the most important, and the one that is of daily application.

## III.

Who can deny, then, dearly beloved, that the fruits of true civilization should be an improvement in habits, the ennobling and purification of souls, courtesy of manners, and gentleness and generosity in our private, domestic, political and civil relations ? No one will, surely, deny that man is not only capable of perfection, but is, moreover, urged on to perfect himself, and no one will have the courage to deny the advancements made in this respect.

Every one, I think, will admit this ; but disagreement begins when a certain party presents this progressive improvement as incompatible with Christianity, with the teachings and influence of the Church, to such an extent that a contest is inaugurated to annihilate it as a danger and an obstacle to the progress desired.

Here, dearly beloved, is the deplorable effect produced by these prejudices ; they blind

all who are animated by them to such an extent that their eyes are closed to the light, and they, finally, come to deny the most certain facts.

Great God ! Thy Holy Church is opposed in her doctrines, in her Visible Head, in her Hierarchy, in her Confraternities, in her Institutions, because all these, it is alleged, are no longer capable of encouraging moral progress ; that all these are the dangerous enemies, mortal enemies, even, of a refinement of manners. Can this be possible ?

And yet, dearly beloved, it is by the preaching of the Gospel, by the constant action of the Catholic Hierarchy that was founded, the civilization that calls itself Christian, a name that is so inextricably interwoven with it, that even the efforts of our times have not succeeded in separating one from the other. Hence, to speak of civilization, is to recognize, in this word, the epithet of Christian.\*

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\* Donoso Cortez has said : The history of civilization is the history of Christianity ; in writing about one, we write about the other.

Now, if it is beyond all doubt, that the Church created this magnificent civilization that has satisfied nineteen centuries of glory, what has recently occurred, to cause her to be looked upon as incapable of following out this grand work? By what authority is she charged with opposing the fulfillment of the conditions by which man perfects himself in the moral order?

Has the task of the Church, perhaps, become more difficult, and has she, in these latter days, met with obstacles that she cannot or knows not how to surmount? It is, most assuredly, not we, who sin by an excess of tenderness for this age that we have had occasion, more than once, to judge severely; and yet what a wide distance there is between us and the perversity of Pagan manners!

We will not stop here to describe the Pagan-world, this picture has been drawn again and again; we will confine ourselves merely to pointing out, by means of negations, the

principal differences between the new era and antiquity. We have no longer that mortal sore, *slavery*, that doomed more than two-thirds of our race to a life of painful labor and indescribable outrages ; this state of things has been reformed with as much constancy as wisdom by the Church. We have no more of those bloody games in which certain unfortunates murdered each other, or in which others were cast as food to ferocious animals, to amuse the idle, and increase their thirst for blood ; a shameful record that was closed, forever, by the blood of a Christian martyr. We have no longer that bitter hatred of the poor, which religion has transfigured by the light of Jesus Christ. We have no longer that atrocious right of war, which destroyed whole nations by calculated butchery, and if, by our crimes and abominations, we sometimes approach the corruption of those ages of depravity, we nevertheless give vice its proper name, and, finally, we no longer people Olympus with accommodating divinities that sanc-

tify it by their examples, and cover it with their protection. We have no more of those easy divorces, those marital oppressions, and the lawful debasement of wives. We cannot even imagine as possible those monstrous figures of the Cæsars, whose every whim became a law. All these things were gradually done away with by the Church. And if we now bitterly deplore the apostacy of governments representing social power, we cannot, however, ignore the fact that beside the depraved official world that is without God, there is another real world, in which there are many beneficent hearts, firm characters, and pure and lofty souls.

From this it results that the Church must now meet with weaker obstacles, since it is less difficult to perfect and to achieve what already exists, than it is to create it altogether. Why, then, pretend that the Church is now shorn of her right to animate the work of civilization by her breath, and claim that she is no longer competent to direct

souls in the paths of moral progress and its diverse relations? Can it be true, perhaps, that the Church has diminished, and that she has lost that abundance of youth and life that extended even into the civil order, and brought it the blessings related by history, and which we contemplate with our own eyes?

Permit me, dearly beloved, briefly to examine these questions. The sources whence these continual advancements proceed, without speaking of that interior grace, which we do not treat of in this present moment, are two in number: the *practical doctrine* contained in the Holy Scriptures, and confided to the Church for keeping and interpretation; and, then, the Divine Model (and by this very fact, wonderfully gifted with an attraction), which is Jesus Christ, Who dwells in the Church, Who is preached by her, and proclaimed in all the beauty of her forms. Now, the Church has lost or denied nothing of this doctrine or this model, in a manner no

longer to obtain the effects they have produced in all branches of civilization ; on the contrary, they both remain always with her to assist her in continually rendering additional services to those who truly love salutary progress.

## IV.

Here, dearly beloved, a picture looms up before our eyes, too vast in its proportions to be unfolded in a single Pastoral Letter ; we will refer only to such portions of it as will enable you to place your finger on the folly of those who claim that the Church is no longer competent to succor and guide the men of the present time.

None of the aspects under which man can be considered, whether as an isolated being or as a member of the different associations have been neglected, and on each one of these points the teachings of the Church un-

ceasingly produce the germs of the most priceless moral improvements.

St. John the Apostle\* has remarked that all that is criminal in the world and calculated to bring about ruin, is reduced to the enjoyment of brutal pleasures, to concupiscence and to the pride of life, that will suffer no restraint. Those who combat Christianity, and who want to build up a civilization outside of it, cannot deny these unfortunate inclinations, the intimate experience that each one has of himself being the most magnificent commentary of Divine revelation.

Now, how does the Church go about restoring order in man, in accordance with the code of morals taught by Jesus Christ? Open the Holy Scriptures on this subject, or that sublime summary of the Sacred Scriptures, which is our Cathechism, and you will there find instructions that would make society happy, even in the temporal order, if men

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\* I Epist., ii, 16.

would only conform themselves to them. Those who allow themselves to be carried away by the attractions of the senses, are reminded that they are to refrain even from a look or an evil thought.\* Put this precept in practice, and you will immediately see disappear, along with obscene manners, those weak bodies, destitute of vigor, in which abide depraved souls, without wings to elevate them, and you will see in their stead the strong bulwarks of the city. You will have chaste nations which, not softened by the seductions of the flesh, celebrate marriage with truth, resort to it, and, clothed in these splendors, spread light far and wide among their brethren.

The man who thirsts after gold is also told that avarice is a slavery ; and that one cannot serve God and Mammon† at the same time. Thus is this modern passion for wealth, which robs man of discernment, and paves

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\* St. Matt., v, 28.

† St. Matt., vi, 24.

the way to crimes, energetically combated. Now, make it so that these words find the soil of the heart well prepared to receive them, and society will no longer be burdened with those cruel men, who set themselves up as the centre of all things ; she will have no more rapines, frauds, artifices and lamentable ruins. Finally, the haughty man is commanded to humble his pride, to borrow ingenuous simplicity from the little child, if he would enter the kingdom of heaven, and he is reminded that only by humiliating himself, can he become truly great in the kingdom.\* Golden words, which, if they were only heeded, would suffice to drive away that spirit of contradiction that allows nothing to escape it ; all quarrels, all that tenacity of personal opinion, often false and foolish, that brings about bitter disappointments and terrible catastrophes. Can the enemies of the Church find remedies better adapted to the evil in-

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\* St. Matt., xviii, 3, 4.

clinations that are in us, and that, like an eternal obstacle, retard the progress of true civilization !

## V.

Ah, dearly beloved, permit us to follow up this methodical research a little farther, and we shall have too frequent occasion to tell you about the glories of modern civilization and its wonderful discoveries ! The individual being prepared, and his abject passions, the cause of all commotions, being conquered in his heart, the Church, without deviating one iota from the lessons of our Saviour, seeks to introduce order in mutual relations.

What presents itself to our consideration above everything else, is the very firm foundation she takes to maintain these relations and make them infallibly profitable to true civilization. This foundation is charity, which, outside of Christianity is not even known by name, or if known at all, it is in a sense al-

together different from the one in which we understand it. No society, in truth, can exist, or has ever really existed without the love that brings its different members together, and makes them walk in concert in the same path.

Far different is the love that animated the Pagans and which still animates those who withdraw from the influence of the Church, from the love that Christianity inspires, and which the grace of Jesus Christ supplies to all hearts. The noblest that can exist outside of Christianity is always accompanied by interest, which seeks rather its own advantage than that of others ; besides, it always shuts itself up within a very limited sphere, and except in rare cases, it shrinks from sacrifices. Friends loved each other because of intrinsic qualities, which are talents, amenity, learning, or extrinsic qualities such as wealth, elegance, or joviality ; but between the different classes there was an abyss that prevented all interchange of affection, and a profound hatred

was generally nourished against those who did not belong to the *city* or to the *gens*, together with the barbarous desire to reduce them to servitude on the first opportunity.

You know, dearly beloved, how Christian manners have totally changed the theory of mutual relations. Charity was rekindled in a much warmer furnace ; men excelling one another, no longer carried with them sentiments of cruelty, and began to love another according to God's example.\* From that time it was known that God, as He has told us He would, excercises a loving care over all His creatures indiscriminately, even those deprived of reason, from the greatest to the least ; that He guides and preserves them by wise laws, and that He embraces all rational creatures with such tenderness as to give His dearly beloved Son for the redemption of all.† And he loves not only those who acknowledge and adore Him, and are obedient and respect-

\* St. John, xiii, 34.

† St. John, iii, 16.

ful to Him, but even those who betray Him, who rise up against Him and trample His laws under their feet.\* And for this love that God nourishes within Him for His creatures, He, most assuredly, expects nothing for Himself,† for He is the absolute Master and the Creator of all things. Not satisfied yet with being so lavish of His love, He adds to it the immense sacrifices by which He has been pleased to redeem us at the price of His sufferings and of His blood, to cleanse us from the state of original sin, and make us a people acceptable in His sight and pursuers of good works. ‡

Such, dearly beloved, is the foundation of the mutual relations that men should have towards each other, according to the morals preached by the Spouse of Jesus Christ ; and I leave it to your judgment to say whether public morals ought not to derive from them the most marvelous advantages, by develop-

\* St. Luke, vi, 27, 29.

† Psalms, xv, 2.

‡ Titus, ii, 14.

ing themselves in improvements ever new and more and more admirable, and gather from them the sweetest fruits that bloom more beautifully, from day to day, on that divine stalk. What the world has gained, and is still gaining, in the school of ineffable love, is well known to us ; it is respect for man even in poverty, even in a low and despicable condition ; it is the ready and sincere pardon of souls, after they have suffered bloody outrages ; it is vengeance diminished or rendered impossible without being severely judged by our own conscience and that of others ; it is equity brought in to mitigate the rigors of the law ; fatigues and privations cheerfully accepted so as to provide for the amelioration of the condition of the poor, of the honest laborer, the orphan and the aged. These are the palpable facts that spring up before our eyes, and the slightest reflection will suffice to ascertain their origin, which, evidently, can be none other than the morals of Jesus Christ, taught by the Church.

Now, dearly beloved, have those who wish to establish a non-Christian civilization in the place of the one that has raised itself to such an incomparable eminence through the energy and labors of the Church, ever obtained a single one of these advantages by their efforts? Make the proper distinction between *words* that cost nothing or next to nothing, and the *practice*, which in this case is everything, and you will see that civilization, far from advancing, is going behind, and is fast losing the headway, which, thanks to us, it once made. Alas! dearly beloved, is there any evidence of a softening of dispositions in that increasing envy and hatred that daily invade and inundate the hearts of persons, destitute of position and material goods, against those who are rich? Are we to see a proof of fraternal and friendly feelings in those fierce commotions, those threats of fire and carnage that grate upon our ears? Are we to behold an agreeable and consoling spectacle in those duels that follow one

another with lamentable frequency, which, for the most futile and often unjust and shameful motives, arm the hand with criminal weapons, and confide the reparation of real or imaginary wrongs, not to the venerated ministry of public justice, but to the *sang froid* and the skill and agility of the combatants? Are we not beginning to become barbarians again, even when arming ourselves with fury in behalf of civilization?

## VI.

But let us turn away from these signs of budding barbarism and rest our eyes with pleasure, and God grant, with profit to your souls, on the salutary influences that Christian morals possess, to sanctify the different branches of society and make them prosperous. The first and most important of these is the conjugal union, from which the family comes first, and then the civil community. It is beyond all doubt, dearly beloved, that out-

side of the beneficent light that Jesus Christ and His Church have shed upon the conjugal tie, its destinies have always been dark and unhappy, while in the Church they have always been happy and prosperous. In the Gospel, marriage was brought back to its first principles ; it was modeled on the type of the bond woven by the very hand of God ; ennobled and elevated to the dignity of a Sacrament, it became, as it were, the living image of the nuptials celebrated by Jesus Christ with His Church. Marriage, after long years of ignominy, appeared crowned with a royal diadem.\* Now, marriage thus transformed, could not fail to become a source of signal advantages to civilization itself, since, honored as it was, it must necessarily borrow the merits that shine forth in the mystic nuptials of the Son of God with His Church. Easy as it may be to recognize the merits from the very first, we cannot, dearly beloved, refrain from point-

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\* St. Matt., xix, 6 — Ephes, v, 32.

ing them out to you, they are so attractive and delightful to contemplate !

Jesus Christ does not give Himself to Heathenism through an impulse of blind love, but with the idea of raising it to a higher level, to put it in a better condition, and to make it happy in that happiness that virtue gives when put in practice. Spouses, too, must not allow themselves to be led away by the fleeting attractions of the senses nor by the deceitful allurements of gold ; but uniting themselves to one creature, they should look higher and seek in virtue the stability and sweetness of a common life.

Heathenism, called, in its turn, to enjoy the society of the Spouse, gave itself up to Him without reserve, abandoned, for His sake, old ties and domestic passions ; so, also, should the Christian wife leave no place for strange attachments, she must enter resolutely into this state, bringing to it the treasure of her graces and her powers. Do you not see that in conforming yourselves to this model, the

flowers of a tender fidelity will overspread the marriage-bed and keep aloof from it the disorders and criminal treachery that soil the purity of the blood and kindle implacable anger on the countenance ?

The Church, during the course of ages, has always been asked by wily and censurable men, to reject the faith she owes to her heavenly Spouse and to alienate herself from Him by schisms ; but while this work of seduction was being urged on with ardor, Christ spoke to His Church with an ineffable gentleness, reminded her of the sacredness of her vows, and the abundance of blessings granted, and revealed to her the malice of her deceivers. The Church, warned of these attempts, drove away these bold men, clung firmly to the faithful arm of her Spouse, harkening to His voice, and adding new and more magnificent garlands to her virginal brow.

What a glorious thing it would be for civilization if spouses imitated this solicitude by coming to each other's assistance in the hour

of danger, and by encouraging one another in well-doing! We justly lament that marriage is dishonored by the vices that spread and go out from the family in the cities ; but would not the contrary take place, and would we not see a moral renovation, if men would become filled with that beautiful emulation, called forth by the example given by Christ and His Church? Finally, Jesus Christ gave His hand to the Church that from her maternal bosom might come forth those pure and chaste generations that were to recall the resplendent features of their Father, justify Him by their words and actions, and cause Him to dwell by faith in their hearts.\* The Church, in her turn, received the children born of this holy union, as a sacred deposit, in her arms ; she purified them, she nourished them and protected them, and more than that, from the very moment of their existence, she has never ceased to instruct them

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\* Ephes., iii, 17.

in her doctrines, to strengthen them in well doing by her exhortations, to recall them by her reproaches, that they might not forget the nobility of their origin and render to their Father the glory that is due Him.

O, you, who are so uneasy about the fate of civilization, and who shake your heads while contemplating with anxiety the waters of that flood that is continually rising higher and growing darker, can you not understand that if this type of marriage were realized as the Church recommends it, and asks it of your children, your terrors would be groundless, and your fears would soon vanish in the light of the brightest hopes ? Give us spouses careful, on the one hand, to follow the designs of Jesus Christ, and on the other to exercise the maternal ministry of the Church, and civilization will be saved. The children that will leave their domestic firesides, to go forth and people the earth, will carry deeply engraved on their hearts those maxims of justice that form the basis of civil life ; they

will be accustomed by a wise education to maintain order, to respect authority, and to observe just laws. In the hands of such parents firm and energetic characters will be moulded, that will not allow themselves to be shaken, nor tossed about by every wind of doctrine.\* In those homes sanctified by faith, and by the examples of parents, the children will have the happiness of learning to carry into society a humanity of feelings, a loyalty of relations, and a constancy in keeping a word once given. A moral efflorescence will take place without noise, but with marvelous efficacy.

And yet, think, dearly beloved, that many men have desired, and still desire to transform this conjugal state into a mere miserable civil contract, and cry out against the *Syllabus*, because it condemns the madmen who declare that at no price whatever can the doctrine by which Jesus Christ raised

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\* Hebrews, xiii, 9.

marriage to the dignity of a Sacrament be tolerated. These men are reprehensible, not only because they deny a religious truth, but also because they insult civilization! Is not opening the door to divorce, which is the inevitable consequence of a marriage thus profaned, in reality a blow at civilization? Is not civilization poisoned, when marriage, stripped of its religious splendor and majesty, is given over into the hands of obscene wretches who, under the pretext of liberty and instability of nature, come with impudence and cynicism to talk to us about temporary unions and to speak unblushingly of vile enjoyments? Under such circumstances, the poor little children run the risk, either of being deprived of maternal care, of perishing before their time, like flowers deprived of the sunlight, or they grow up with no assured direction, with no solid bonds of affection to attach them to home, and through home, to their country! And it is to give us such a civilization as this that the enemies of

the Church have undertaken their famous warfare!

## VII.

But, dearly beloved, let us proceed with what yet remains for us to traverse ; and since you have seen very clearly how the Church provides for the requirements of civilization by the conjugal bond, prepare yourselves for the enjoyment of a magnificent spectacle in the contemplation of the advantages that civilization derives from the doctrines by which the Church regulates the relations of man in that wider sphere called civil society. In this, we must observe, on the one hand, the subjects, which form, as it were, the matter to be governed on the other, the sovereign power, which is the principle that guides and carries submission to its end. Now, with regard to each of these, the Church, faithfully interpreting the Sacred Scriptures, teaches what, if put in practice, would give

the most vigorous impulse to civilization, and contribute, most effectively, to making it really fecund.

“*Power*,” she says, “*is from God*.” (Rom. XIII, 1.) But if power is from God, it should reflect the divine majesty to command respect and the goodness of God to become sweet and acceptable to all subject to it. Whoever, then, holds the reins of power ; whether it be an individual or a community ; whether the functions be held by election or by birth ; in a democratic country or in a monarchy, must not look to power for the gratification of ambition, nor the vain pride of being above everybody ; but, on the contrary, he must seek the means of serving his brethren, even as the Son of God, Who came not to be ministered unto but to minister unto others. (St. Mark X, 45.) These are short maxims, but they nevertheless contain the most happy and the most consoling transformation of power that could be desired.

## PAGAN ABUSE OF POWER.

The kings of nations had strangely abused authority ; their covetousness was unbounded, and they satisfied it by devouring the substance of the people and the fruits of their labor ; their will was law, and woe to him who dreamed of escaping it. Not satisfied with this, they assumed high sounding titles, which were nothing but cruel and solemn irony, when compared with the reality.

Far different is the power that springs from Christian teaching ; it is modest, laborious, careful to encourage good, and is restrained by the consciousness that at the last judgment, punishments are reserved for those who govern badly. It is impossible, dearly beloved, not to see this ; we feel our hearts expand before so noble an image of authority, and the obedience it demands and which is indispensable to the order and advancement of so-

ciety, is stripped of all its bitterness and becomes mild and easy.

The teachings with regard to persons subject to authority are in keeping with those regarding persons in authority. If authority is indebted to God for its existence, its majesty and its solicitude to accomplish everthing good, it is impossible to believe that any one can rebel against it, because he would be rebelling against God. The obedience of the subject must be free, loyal, and should spring from an inward feeling, and not from a fear of servile punishment ; it must carry with it the proof of its sincerity and inspire a cheerful acceptance of the sacrifices demanded by him who holds the reins of power, for the fulfillment of his ministry.

It may be that on more than one occasion, dearly beloved, you have given expression to violent charges against the Church, which is represented as the foe to the liberties of man, and the most humble servant of every power on earth. You can now estimate the justice

of these charges. The Church, most assuredly, has no approval to bestow on abettors of disorders, nor on systematic enemies of authority ; but the obedience she inculcates finds a powerful recompense in the transformation, of power, which, having become Christian and divested of its old and shameful tendencies to ambition and tyranny, assumes the character of a paternal ministry and finds its limits in the justice of its commands. If these limits are over-stepped by invading the domain of conscience, a voice is heard exclaiming with the Apostles : “ God must be obeyed before all.” Ah ! dearly beloved, men who are vile, and tremble with base fears, are not reared in the arms of the Church ; they are begotten away from her and in those societies that recognize no exterior law save brute force.

#### CHRISTIAN INDEPENDENCE.

Tertullian, even in his day, observed, that

the early Christians paid their taxes just as faithfully as they observed the precept that forbids stealing.\* But those virtuous men were ignorant of the art of yielding to the unjust behests of the Cæsars. In the presence of those who made kings pale, their faces blanched not, and while others fell upon their knees, they knew how to stand erect and to die in defence of the *rights of conscience*. It is painful, dearly beloved, to hear these charges repeated so often, when we know that *true liberty is a flower that springs up spontaneously in a sphere of society that is guided by the spirit of the Catholic Church.* When, in effect, the hand of the ruler falls heavily upon the people and when public franchises are in great danger ; when man's free action is hampered ; when triumphant impiety breaks the sacred bonds of religion ; when conscience, perverted by the passions, becomes smothered ; when crime is on the in-

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\* Tertull : *Apolog.*

crease ; then authority becomes suspicious, and finding no defence in the loyalty of the oppressed, seeks it in arms, in numerous guards and in an Argus-eyed police. We might here give you undoubted instances of all we have said by comparing the present condition of the world with a past that is not so remote as to be beyond the recollection of most of you ; but we prefer to produce evidence for you above the suspicion of those who imagine they can ameliorate the moral condition of society and the civil relations of men by breaking loose from the teachings of the Church.

Benjamin Franklin, at the close of a life spent in the midst of public affairs, and matured by long experience, wrote from Philadelphia : "A nation cannot be truly free, without being virtuous ; and the more nations become depraved and corrupt the more they require a master."

Another writer, whose name is held in veneration among the abettors of the so-called

"struggle for civilization," in his turn, remarked: "Religion should not be destroyed, because a nation without a religion soon falls under an absolutely military government." And he was right in saying so, he who saw the licentious masquerades, and the impious and bloody farces of the French Republic, followed by a government which, by means of a disciplined soldiery, enforced submission upon men who had rebelled against God, and who aspired to shape everything, arts, letters, the universities, and even consciences, to their own whims, until their audacity dashed itself to pieces against the constancy of the Christian Priesthood.

Let us here pause, dearly beloved, and from the lofty eminence we have attained, let us cast a retrospective glance at the ground we have gone over. In contemplating the persistent warfare waged against the Catholic Church in the name of civilization, we have endeavored to ascertain whether the Church has become, by any unfortunate cir-

cumstances, so far incapacitated to contribute to the moral perfection of man, and to the development of civilization, as no longer to bring about those wonderful results we have seen in former times. Now, after questioning man as an individual, man in his relations with his fellow men, and in civil and domestic society, an examination, such as we have been able to make in the naturally very narrow limits of a Pastoral instruction, has sufficed to convince us that the doctrines of the Church contain the most priceless germs of civilization, which, if followed out, will infallibly lead to the highest moral perfection that can be hoped for on earth.

## VIII.

### THE LIVING MODEL.

But holy doctrines, such as the Church teaches her children, could only produce a very insufficient effect, if they never went

beyond the sphere of theory. To make this effect complete, its doctrines must assume shape in a living *Model*, on Whom men can look to convince themselves that these doctrines are by no means mere ideas to be admired with the complaisance with which one contemplates a fine picture or a magnificent panorama, but that they are practical truths that must be resolutely transformed into acts. They were understood in this way by the Pagans themselves, who justly imagined that beautiful maxims and wise lessons would remain a dead letter, and continue ineffectual in making the world better, so long as they were not personated by a living model. Plato, who discovered so many and such lofty truths, whether by his natural genius or by his laborious researches into ancient traditions, firmly convinced that the written or spoken word could be of no lasting or conclusive avail, anxiously desired to see Truth itself become incarnate, and appear visible to the eyes of all. Cicero, who was not only a great orator,

but an eminent philosopher, and a worthy representative of Latin learning among the Pagans, was led by the same reason to express the same desire. Seneca, who, in spite of all that can be said about his private life, nevertheless wrote words worthy of a Christian, and who, in all probability, possessed some tinge of Christianity, referred, in a letter to Lucilius, to the necessity of having a great and noble model before us, on which to shape our lives, and since models of this kind were not to be had, he recommended, for want of something better, the selection of the less imperfect Cato, for example.

Now, the necessity for a living and perfect model which the most powerful minds of Pagan antiquity had a longing for, is satisfied in the believer. This model which they longed and prayed for in vain, the Church reveals to us by placing before our eyes the life of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of the Father, the substantial Image of Infinite Goodness, made Man for us. How beautiful,

dearly beloved, is the magnificent Model the Church gives us, and which the Church defended against the outrages of the Gnostics, Arians, and all heretics, down to the Protestants, down to modern infidels, who are endeavoring in various ways to rob Him of that crown of heavenly light that shines upon His majestic brow. Jesus is the Man-God, and consequently He is Boundless Virtue, Absolute Perfection. For nineteen centuries individuals, nations, institutions, have been trying to contemplate Him, and they always find something to learn from Him, some new perfection to borrow from Him, just as if it were only yesterday that men began to try to imitate Him.

Jesus Christ, besides being a Divine Model, is most perfect, because He appears as our Master in all the conditions of life. The greater part of the human race is composed of poor people, laborers, who must earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, and who barely succeed, by their labor, in obtaining

enough for themselves and their families. It is precisely on their account that Jesus Christ was born poor, and that He led a life of poverty in His father's workshop, engaged in the humble occupations of an artisan.

O, my dear co-laborers ! you, who are daily witnesses of so many sufferings and privations that the world knows nothing of, and which it refuses to see, for fear of disturbing its profane pleasures ; you, who so often share your meagre subsistence with the poor, and who would gladly do more and better than this, for those bereft of this world's riches ; fail not, whenever the opportunity presents itself, in holding up before the eyes of these unfortunates, the example of that Divine Saviour, the very sight of Whom is our greatest consolation. Let your accusers, who imagine they can inaugurate another civilization for the people, say what they will. As for you, while bringing the saving balm of religion to souls, you are, at the same time, conferring a great service upon civilization.

You will calm those wild and unruly agitations that may, one day, degenerate into acts of the most barbarous atrocity ; you will lift up those souls that poverty has humbled in their own eyes, and in the eyes of others, and who, by the teachings of Christ, will be able to appreciate their dignity, that royal dignity that Jesus Christ obtained for them, and which they will try to preserve by honesty and the practice of all the virtues.

But if Jesus Christ is, on the one hand, the most perfect Model of the poor, He is also, on the other, an equally perfect Model for the kings and the great men of this world.

Jesus Christ is a king, and He displays His kingly dignity by the absolute empire He exercises over all nature and over the souls of rational beings ; nature humbles itself at the sound of His voice, it modifies, it suspends the course of the immutable laws that control it ; the winds subside ; ailments multiply ; souls, even the most hardened and perverse are subdued by His word, by the irresistible

fascination of His look and of His countenance. But this royal power that He possesses so completely, He uses for the salvation of men ; for supplying their wants ; for healing the many infirmities that afflict them ; for rousing them from the iron sleep of death ; for delivering them from the oppression of Satan, who has taken possession even of their bodies ; for delivering them from the still more oppressive and dangerous tyranny of the wicked passions that abide in them and the vices that soil them. Ah, dearly beloved, who will give it to us to see all those who are great among their fellows ; all who hold the sceptre and reins of power in their hands, coming to Jesus Christ to follow His example and to conform their lives to His ? We will then see flourishing in society not only great saints, but kings memorable for their civil enterprises, such as Henry of Bavaria, Stephen of Hungary, and Louis of France !

Jesus is a Father, not by a carnal generation, but by that infinitely higher generation

that begets life from the mind. Now, what a grand and sublime character does it not require, to modify the minds of rude men and make new beings of them? Jesus applied Himself with an ineffable solicitude to raising and to transforming into men gifted with a new mind those rude disciples that He called around Him and whom He predestined for the Apostolate. How He accommodated Himself to their defects, and with what wisdom did He not aid their weakness and encourage them when they appeared vacillating in the faith! And when He was about to be separated from them in the flesh and to go back to Him that had sent Him, with what words of affection did He not recommend them to His Heavenly Father, Who was also theirs!

O parents, if one single spark of the fire that fell from the words of Jesus, as recorded by St. John the Evangelist, only burned in your hearts, how much would your children profit by it, and through them, what would

not civil society gain in moral perfection ! Jesus Christ depended upon no one, because He was God ; yet He was willing to be subject to His true Mother according to the flesh, and to His foster-father, to teach children to submit affectionately to the authors of their existence and to show them that as these latter hold the name of father from God, they also borrow from God the rights of paternity over their children. If young people only took this example for their Model, would it not prove an effective remedy to one of the most terrible evils of our day, namely, impatience of all restraint and of all law ? These sons, in following the example of Jesus Christ, would be respectful to paternal authority and would leave their homes with habits of order, and be obedient to the commands of those in authority and who represent God in the government of affairs. We take special delight in speaking of this Sovereign Model, and we would gladly dwell upon the treasures hidden in Him, and on the relations existing between

these treasures and civilization, did not the length of our letter already admonish us to bring it to a speedy termination.

For the rest, dearly beloved, you can yourselves readily enlarge upon this picture, by considering Jesus Christ as the Friend, the Power of the Weak, the Firm Defender of Truth, the Man of great and generous sacrifices, and so on. Jesus Christ really appears as a source of life to whomsoever comes to Him and endeavors to put in practice the beautiful and saving doctrines He preached.

Under the influence of this reflection, the illustrious and valorous defender of the divinity of the Word, the great Athanasius, exclaimed : “Jesus Christ Who is eternally immutable, came among us, that men might have a Model of Life and a stable principle of justice in the immutable justice of the Word.”\*

St. Augustine expressed the same idea in

\* *Contra Arianos* iii, 13.

other words ; he says that Jesus Christ, during all His life on earth, among men whose nature He assumed, was the supreme law of morals.\* We must not be surprised that the Fathers of the Church combated opposing maxims in this manner, since we see them repeated, almost word for word, by those unfortunates who have risen up among us to deny the divinity of Christ. It will be enough to quote, among many others, the words of the most audacious among them, who, fascinated by the light that surrounds Jesus Christ, was compelled to recognize in Him, "The Man who had a deep-rooted personal determination, which surpassed that of all other beings in intensity, so much so, that it still directs the destinies of the human race."† Further on he entones a hymn, so to speak : "Thou shalt assist from the bosom of divine peace at the incalculable consequences entailed by Thy acts....

\* De Vera Relig., xvi.

† Ernest Renan, Vie de Jesus, page 46.

" For thousands of years to come the world will look to Thee as a Model on which to conform its life, troubled by our contradictions. Thou wilt be the standard around which the most determined battles will be fought ; a thousand times more living, a thousand times more beloved after Thy death than during Thy career on earth, Thou wilt become the Corner-stone of humanity, to such a degree that to take Thy name out of the world would be to shake it to its very foundations.\*

## IX.

To sum up in a few words all I have said to you in this Pastoral Letter ; if the Church possesses a doctrine which, observed and practiced in life, must infallibly lead her children to a marvelous moral perfection, and impart to them a purity and gentleness of

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\* Ernest Renan, *Ibid*, p. 426.

manners, a cordiality and agreement of relations ; if she possesses what the sages of antiquity vainly longed for, the Supreme Model, perfect and absolute in every virtue, and in every generous sentiment ; if she has never permitted her doctrine to be changed, nor her Divine Model to be dishonored by blasphemous negations and the blind assaults of her enemies ; if, in a word, the doctrines she teaches and the Model she offers to our imitation have been enough to produce marvelous, manifestly superhuman effects, in the past, it clearly follows that there can be no good reason for overturning the world by tearing civilization from the beneficent influences of the Church, and handing it over into barbucus hands that can bring forth nothing but the most cruel carnage.

## X.

What, then, are the fruits that public morals have reaped, and what advantages have

mutual relations derived from this fatal contest, undertaken under the specious pretext of leading civilization to a higher and nobler destiny? We can point to nothing but the vast ruins that smoke before our eyes, but the mere mention of this is enough to tell the whole story. Morality torn from the arms of the Church, and stripped by treachery of its religious foundations, has continued to be blown about by every wind; it has ceased to be the authorized rule of action; it has become the sport and the vile instrument of all appetites. A code of morals has been invented for every age and for every clime, and men have even been permitted to violate it according to their own whims.

“ Man,” an impious contemporary has presumed to write, “ sanctifies what he writes, and embellishes everything he loves with the flowers of imagination.”\* Is it not easy,

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\* Ern. Renan, *Revue des Deux-Mondes*, October, 1862.

after this, to bring ourselves (as the authors of these theories set us the example) to apologize for what is dishonest; to call the pleasures of the senses divine; to outrage the laws of modesty; to pursue a beauty that flies like a shadow, and which, at best, should only raise our souls to God, like a ladder that leads us to Him Who is the Great Source of all that is precious and delightful?

These are the fruits brought forth by the great rebellion born in this world. These fruits do not promise us, as you will readily perceive, desirable advancements of civilization, but create terrors, awakened by the approach of that worse species of barbarism that springs from a corrupted civilization. These fatal results should be a warning to imprudent men, and deter them from following perverse masters, by uniting them to the Church by close and indissoluble bonds. But, unfortunately, we see that such is not the case and that fortune smiles upon the seducers. When

the anxiety we must feel for your souls leads us to inquire into the cause of this, we imagine we find it partly in the Satanic efforts made to pervert souls, and partly in the éclat in which they envelop the object they wish to encourage. Civilization is a name that sounds pleasantly to the ear, and many people stop at the name, do not inquire what civilization is spoken of, nor by what means it is produced, nor to what end it tends, hence it is that they exchange pure gold for what is nothing more than base metal.

It is for you, my dear co-laborers, to make it clear to the eyes of those whose souls you direct, that honest and legitimate civilization is not only not compromised nor rejected by the Pope and the Bishops, and by those who are faithful to the Church, but that, on the contrary, this civilization has no more valiant and active defenders.

Since our adversaries, deprived of better argument, resort to falsehoods, you must follow them, step by step, and meet their

calumnies and shameful hypocrisies, with the light of reason and the incontestable evidence of facts.

The Lord will bless your efforts, and, prejudices being rooted out from the minds of the people, it will be easier for you to plant the seed of the Word, and to water it with the dews of grace that cause it to bring forth the sweetest fruits of life. Efforts to mislead are multiplying on every side, and your efforts must increase, in the same proportion, to save from ruin, souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

#### THE DEATH OF PIUS IX.

Here, dearly beloved, while writing these lines, our heart is overcome by immeasurable grief, for we must announce to you the great affliction that has just thrown the Catholic world into the deepest mourning, and which increases the troubles by which the Church is at present surrounded. Ah! when we com-

menced to write this letter, we were very far from dreaming that we would be so suddenly deprived of our glorious Pontiff and most beloved Father! We had hoped to see him once more regain his robust health and to ask of him, for you, his Apostolical Benediction, in exchange for your filial supplications in behalf of so beloved a Pontiff! God in His wise designs has willed otherwise ; He willed to give him the reward earned by the long and invaluable services he rendered to our common Mother, the Church ; by his immortal deeds ; by his sufferings borne with so much constancy, dignity and apostolic firmness. Oh ! beloved co-laborers, do not forget to recommend at the Holy Sacrifice this soul on which God had stamped such a strong impress of Himself ; speak to your children of his merits, and tell them all this great Pontiff Pius the IX did, not only for the Church and for the good of souls, but also to extend the sway of Christian civilization.

Pray, dearly beloved brethren of the clergy,

and you, my beloved children of the laity, pray to God, that He vouchsafe, speedily, to grant His Church another Head ; pray, also, that He may extend His protection over him after his election, to the end that he may guide the mystic bark intrusted to his direction, safely through the raging tempests to the longed-for haven.

Think, also, in your prayers of us, who bestow upon you, with all our heart, our Pastoral Benediction.

G. Cardinal PECCI,  
Bishop of Perugia.

ROME, Outside of the Flaminian Gate,  
February 10, 1878.







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